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UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST

Offers by Member States of grants and scholarships for higher education, including vocational training, for Palestine refugees

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The present report is submitted to the General Assembly in pursuance of its resolution 47/69 D of 14 December 1992.

2. The report includes the substance of responses from Member States and United Nations agencies to the appeal contained in General Assembly resolution 47/69 D, together with reference to further action taken by Member States and United Nations agencies in response to the appeal contained in Assembly resolutions 32/90 F of 13 December 1977, 33/112 C of 18 December 1978, 34/52 C of 23 November 1979, 35/13 B of 3 November 1980, 36/146 H of 16 December 1981, 37/120 D of 16 December 1982, 38/83 D of 15 December 1983, 39/99 D of 14 December 1984, 40/165 D of 16 December 1985, 41/69 D of 3 December 1986, 42/69 D of 2 December 1987, 43/57 D of 6 December 1988, 44/47 D of 8 December 1989, 45/73 D of 11 December 1990 and 46/46 D of 9 December 1991. By these resolutions the Assembly appealed to all States, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations to augment special allocations for grants and scholarships to Palestine refugees; invited the relevant United Nations agencies to continue, within their respective spheres of competence to extend assistance for higher education to Palestine refugee students; and requested the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the near East (UNRWA) to act as the recipient and trustee for such special allocations and scholarships and to award them to qualified refugee candidates.

3. In 1992-1993, the Government of Japan offered 23 fellowships, through UNRWA, to Palestine refugees who are employed at UNRWA as vocational training staff at UNRWA headquarters branch at Amman and at the eight vocational training centres in UNRWA's area of operations. Applications of nominees for these fellowships are currently being processed by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The fellowships, which apply to studies in Japan, are under the

guidance of JICA. A review of this programme shows that, since its inception in 1985 and until 1993, a total of 115 fellowships has been provided by the Government of Japan under the programme. In 1989, the Government of Japan contributed $1 million to be spent over a five-year period towards the UNRWA university scholarship programme for secondary school graduates. The recipients are Palestine refugee students from the occupied territory. A total of 135 recipients participated in the programme in 1992-1993. In addition, in 1992 the Government of Japan contributed $400,000 to be spent over a five-year period, towards the UNRWA university scholarships programme for secondary school graduates from UNRWA's area of operations; the recipients are Palestine refugee students. A total of 68 recipients participated in the programme in 1992-1993. These awards, while not specifically in response to the relevant General Assembly resolutions, are in keeping with their spirit.

4. The Government of Switzerland contributed $180,000 in 1989 to the UNRWA university scholarship programme for secondary school graduates, and contributed an additional $213,000, $197,300 and $197,300 to the programme in 1990, 1991 and 1992, respectively. The recipients, a total of 169 Palestine refugee students, participated in the programme in the 1992-1993 academic year. The awards, while not specifically in response to General Assembly resolutions, are in keeping with their spirit.

5. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran offered 30 university scholarships in 1992 for secondary school graduates for study at Iranian universities. A total of 29 applications from Palestine refugee students from the Agency's area of operations were referred to the relevant Iranian authorities for their review and consideration. The awards, while not specifically in response to the relevant General Assembly resolutions, are in keeping with their spirit.

6. The Government of the Netherlands contributed in 1992 an amount of $426,533 to cover the university tuition fees of Palestinian students studying in Egyptian universities. This amount was channelled through UNRWA, which made the payments in cooperation with the League of Arab States. A total of 119 Palestinian students benefited from this contribution.

7. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as part of its long-standing agreement with UNRWA, granted 172 fellowships to Palestine refugee education staff of UNRWA in the period 1981 to 1983. The Director-General addressed a circular letter on 22 January 1993, to Member States, international organizations and Arab and Islamic funding sources appealing for voluntary contributions in order to make good the deficit of the operating budget of Palestinian universities caused by the protracted closure of these institutions and by the current situation. This appeal was in accordance with decision 4.3.1 adopted by the UNESCO Executive Board at its 139th session. Between 1986 and 1991, the Director-General had issued several appeals for contributions to the Special Fund established by UNESCO to provide fellowships to students from the occupied Palestinian territories. Contributions received until 1991 totalled $363,000 from which more than 70 fellowships have been granted, including 20 fellowships for the 1992-1993 academic year. No further contributions have been received since 1991. During the 1992-1993 academic year, UNESCO awarded 13 scholarships to Palestinian students from its regular programme and budget, and four scholarships under its

Participation Programme. Furthermore, in September 1992, UNESCO signed a cooperative agreement with an inter-university cooperation programme called PEACE (Palestinian European Academic Cooperation in Education). Under this agreement, to which UNESCO has contributed $16,000 through UNITWIN (University Twinning), six Palestinian universities will be linked to 12 European universities, to undertake activities including staff exchanges and the granting of fellowships.

8. The World Health Organization (WHO) continued to offer a post-graduate training fellowship programme aimed at developing the technical and managerial skills of the staff of the Department of Health of UNRWA and at meeting future replacement needs under the various health disciplines. Four Palestinian refugee health staff of UNRWA benefited from these WHO international fellowships in 1992. WHO has awarded more than 35 such fellowships since 1986.

9. Following a request received from the Al-Quds Open University at Amman in mid-1992, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) plans to assess the dairy training facilities of the University. A FAO mission is scheduled to undertake this task towards the end of 1993 in the context of a review of dairy training facilities in the Near East, and the possible activation of the Regional Dairy Training Centre in Alexandria, Egypt, which was installed under the FAO/DANIDA Programme.